

LABOUR MONTHLY

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New Times,

New Measures * R.P.D.

After the Visit

* Quæstor

No Automation Without

Consultation * Reg Birch

The Devil's Dilemma

* Ivor Montagu

Constructive Co-existence * Economista

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AN OLD RIDDLE



THERE used to be a teasing conundrum with which children were plagued by their elders. 'To be wise, popular, honest; you may choose two only of these virtues—but which will you choose to do without?' To sort that lot out would take a trick cyclist all his time. However, it would be no puzzle to the commercial press; it would cost them neither tears nor temper, nor would they need to summon the aid of an Electronic Brain. *Honest?* Note their treatment of the Standard men's struggle against the management's refusal to negotiate on redundancy threatened by Automation. Observe their reporting of any working class action, for that matter; whether tenants' association deputation or the annual conference of some quarter of a million trade unionists dubbed as 'Communist-led'. Besides the commercial press, gutter or glossy, there are of course the many periodicals of the labour movement; but here the discarded virtue is most often that of popularity. (There are not a few trade union journals, for example, that even the most loyal member could scarcely read without dozing off.) But why should we let ourselves accept a false dilemma, fit only to tease children? Doesn't the movement deserve to be served by many wise, popular and honest journals? I forget who it was—Mark Twain, perhaps?—who once remarked that what the people needed was a journal that could never be bought, yet could always be sold. That pithy quip about sums up, I think, what should be the aim of

working class journalism today—and all journalism tomorrow, when the people will own Press and presses and so call the tune. Meanwhile, to wisdom, popularity and honesty, I think we should aim to add yet another virtue, one greatly praised by William Morris. After editing the *Commonweal* for six months he self-critically reviewed its progress at the annual meeting of the Socialist League in July, 1885. The report describes him as saying that 'he was very conscious that the literary character of the paper should be maintained. He, for one, could not offer to the workers what he did not himself think good'.

Such a formidable specification no journal could attempt to meet without the advice, suggestions, support and exchange of ideas from its readers. Here LABOUR MONTHLY has great riches to draw upon—from readers of every kind of experience and all countries. This lease-lend aid between readers and us who work on L.M. doesn't stop at the exchange of ideas. I was present last month at a trade union conference where one of our keenest circulation-builders made it his business himself to sell the May number to his mates who were delegates. His results neared a hundred copies—better than one delegate in four bought a copy. (And that is five times the number he sells every month, on the job and to his trade union branch members.) It didn't stop at that, and he of course is not the only one. To make the trip cost him something and left him out of pocket. Whereupon, I found, two

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Notes of the Month*New Times, New Measures*

'The world changes and in these days it changes rapidly. A policy that was good six months ago is not necessarily now of any validity. It is necessary that we find better, more effective ways of keeping ourselves in tune with the world's needs.'

President EISENHOWER, April 21, 1956.

FROM Fulton to Aachen is geographically many leagues. In the span of time it is ten years. In the measure of world politics it is the journey from the abyss of darkness to the first rays of sunrise. Ten years have passed since Sir Winston Churchill, in the words of the *Daily Telegraph* (10.5.56) 'in his courageous Fulton speech of 1946 declared the Cold War open'. Already within seven years, by 1953, in face of the visible bankruptcy of the Western dreams of military and nuclear superiority to impose dictated solutions, and in face of the impregnable peaceful strength and staggering constructive advance of the socialist world, the author of Fulton led the way among Western political leaders in publicly advocating a new perspective for top-level negotiations for peaceful co-existence. But this year at Aachen the premier veteran statesman of the Western world went further.

Portent of Aachen

On May 10, 1956, Sir Winston Churchill at Aachen, in the presence of Premier Adenauer (to whom his speech gave, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, 'his biggest headache since his visit to Moscow in September'), launched a direct offensive against the basic cold war conception of the division of Europe into opposing military camps. With one blow he shattered the whole mythology of presenting the truncated torso of a bloc of Western European states as 'United Europe'. 'In a true unity of Europe', he declared, 'Russia must have her part'. With regard to all the forms of so-called 'European unity' expressed in Nato, Western European Union, O.E.E.C., the 'Council of Europe', etc., he declared that 'the spirit of this arrangement should not exclude Russia and the Eastern European States'. 'The great issues which perplex us', he went on, 'of which one of the gravest is the reunification of Germany, could then be solved more easily than by rival blocs confronting each other with suspicion and hostility'.

The Wheel Turns

Two years ago the Soviet Union offered to join Nato, in order to bring to the test of practice whether it was really a defensive alliance, as alleged, or in its essential character an anti-Soviet military coalition, and met with a refusal. Last year at the Foreign Minister's Conference at Geneva the Soviet Union proposed a united European Collective Security Pact, which should draw together and eventually replace both Nato and the Warsaw Pact, and thus end the dangerous confrontation of opposing military blocs. This proposal was rejected by the Western Foreign Ministers. The Soviet Union equally proposed that the unification of a peaceful Germany could best be achieved within such a framework of European Collective Security (as, indeed, the original Directive from the Heads of States Conference had plainly implied, by placing the question of German unification several paragraphs down in the agenda after the question of European security). This was no less absolutely refused by the Western Foreign Ministers, who insisted on their 'take it or leave it' terms of German unification in a partitioned Europe as the first condition for any settlement and as their non-negotiable ultimatum on the basis of which they broke up the Conference. Now the broad conception underlying the Soviet proposals has been presented in general outline with dramatic emphasis by Sir Winston Churchill as the path to a peaceful solution. No wonder the *Daily Telegraph* warns against the 'overriding

danger' of regarding the Churchillian policy as 'practicable in the present'. But even the gutter press has not so far dared to present Sir Winston as the Gramophone of Moscow. When the Cold War-maker of Fulton has become the Grand Peacemaker of Aachen, this is a measure of the transformation that is taking place in the world.

Churchillian Barometer

For the Churchillian initiative does not stand alone. The elder statesman may still be, as often before on some of the wider strategic-political issues of world relations, a little ahead of the main body of the politicians and generals of the capitalist world, the Montgomerys, Ismays or Macmillans today, or the Neville Chamberlains and Hoares of yesterday. This wider strategic conception in viewing the world outlook from the standpoint of his class has on occasions led him in an extreme reactionary direction. As the main protagonist of the wars of intervention, he was profoundly conscious of the new world era which was opening with the first victory of the working class and socialism, and desired to strangle it at birth. Similarly his recognition of the far-reaching world significance of Indian freedom led to his desperate rear-guard diehard fight against it. As the author of Fulton, he was no less conscious of the new balance of world relations with the extension of socialism to a world system, and once again hoped to use superior military nuclear power to turn the tide of history. But the same wider conception has also on occasions led him to stand in the forefront for conclusions of progressive significance. Before the second world war he was the first of the capitalist politicians to recognise the danger of the policy of promoting Hitler's rearmament and expansion as the supposed grand weapon against communism, and during the war he took the lead in embracing the alliance with the Soviet Union which saved the world—even though not without ulterior very different calculations for the future. So today since 1953 he has taken the lead among capitalist politicians in recognising the new balance of the world situation, the bankruptcy of the cold war policies, and the necessity to advance to meet the Soviet Union halfway in order to realise a positive policy for peaceful co-existence.

British-Soviet Talks

But in varying degree the same new tendencies have made themselves felt in all the countries of the Western alliance. The

British Conservative Government has welcomed Bulganin and Khrushchov for the most important talks since the Geneva summit meeting to carry forward the meeting of Heads of States on both sides. The frank and friendly interchange, and the constructive communiqué, have demonstrated the positive significance of these talks as a step forward on the path of peaceful co-existence. This positive significance has only been underlined by the failure of the reactionary diehard campaign to cancel or sabotage the talks. It is regrettable that the true feelings of the labour movement were misrepresented by the dinner episode, which succeeded in creating the impression that, at a moment when the Tory Government was striving to improve friendly relations with the Soviet Union, Labour appeared to be ranged with the most hostile anti-Soviet cold war forces. Had the full strength of the labour movement been mobilised for constructive aims, there is no doubt that more positive results could have been won from the talks. As it is, on the key issues of disarmament, the trade bans and European collective security the battle has still to be fought and won. Nevertheless, the outcome of the talks, the concrete trade offer, and the character of Sir Anthony Eden's subsequent broadcast and agreement to make a return visit to Moscow represent a serious step forward along the road.

Ferment in the West

Nor does Britain stand alone in thus taking the first tentative steps towards a new response to a new world situation. France's Premier Mollet has left for Moscow, following the visit of the French Socialist delegation and its talks with the representatives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (in practical contradiction of the Socialist International Bureau declaration attempting to veto such talks). France proposed through the Pineau plan to transform the emphasis of Nato to the economic plane, supported the Soviet proposal for a ban on arms exports to the Middle East, and has welcomed Tito to Paris. In Western Germany, even at the same time as the re-armament plans have now openly drawn in Hitler's principal generals such as Halder and the convicted war criminal Manstein to guide them, the flood of public expression rises against the bankruptcy of the Adenauer policy of relying on the power of Nato to force unification on the Western terms, and the demand gathers for direct negotiations with the Soviet Union as the path to peaceful reunification. Even in the United States, the confusion and controversy on future policy in

the midst of the partial paralysis of a presidential election year is accompanied by signs of new trends. In relation to the discussions on the future of Nato at its Council meeting the *Observer* reported on May 13 :

. . . the product of a pre-conference working group in which America played a leading role—the idea of a general European security group which might embrace both Nato and the Warsaw Pact. To put it bluntly, the American view is that Nato has grown stale.

Disarmament Deadlock and Disarmament Practice

This new climate in Western opinion and discussion has not yet found reflection in the necessary positive advance to new policies, corresponding to the far-reaching advance carried out by the Soviet Union and the socialist world. The Western powers still cling to the entire structure of the old cold war policies, even at the same time as their increasingly visible bankruptcy in the new conditions is recognised. This was shown in the breakdown of the Disarmament Sub-Committee negotiations, where the Western representatives aroused the biting sarcastic comment of their own supporters by successively obstructing every one of their own proposals as soon as the Soviet Union accepted them, and finally sought to introduce unlimited new conditions by demanding settlement of every political question all over the world before disarmament. But here, too, these tactics have proved a boomerang. To the mortification of the Western representatives, the Soviet Union has proceeded to cut the knot of the deadlock, so far as it can be cut from its side, by entering on large-scale unilateral disarmament, with the slashing of its armed forces by 65 divisions and 1,200,000 men, on top of the previous reduction of 640,000, or a net reduction of 1,840,000. A crash of shares on Wall Street followed this alarming news. The armaments tycoons very well understood that this practical example will overwhelmingly reinforce the popular campaign in the Western countries to compel a corresponding large-scale reduction of armed forces and a disarmament agreement.

What to do with the Dinosaur?

Similarly the Nato Council meeting in May revealed the same crisis of Western policy. 'Confusion', 'frustration', 'fundamental differences', 'deep divergences'—such are the terms the most responsible press reporters have used to describe the meeting. On the one hand, it was recognised that the ancient imaginary bogey

of an impending Soviet military onslaught could no longer be maintained or effective to induce the peoples to put up with the burdens of rearmament whose costs had totalled some 300 billion dollars or £107,000,000,000. On the other hand, as soon as it was proposed to endeavour to put a more reasonable face on the monster, and to present its purpose as mainly economic, insuperable difficulties were discovered. For not only did such economic projects cut across and duplicate the proliferation of West European and Atlantic economic organs already established. Still more decisive, it was obvious that the assumed main source of funds would need to be from the United States; and the United States had made abundantly clear, first, that it would never allow its foreign 'aid' funds to pass from its own control into the hands of any international body; and second, that the purposes of its foreign 'aid' were, and would remain, overwhelmingly military and strategic. Of the current vast figures of foreign 'aid' appropriations at this moment being demanded by President Eisenhower from Congress (figures often quoted by innocent, or perhaps sometimes less innocent, commentators as 'proof' of how far more abundant is American 'aid' than the socialist economic aid to under-developed countries), 83 per cent. is officially declared to be military aid, while the remaining less than one sixth of so-called 'economic' aid (mainly to bolster up Rhee, Chiang, Diem and other dictators) is expressly declared to be subservient to the strategic aims of U.S. foreign policy.

From Words to Deeds

Hence the monster remains in fact as before. After all the discussions about face-lifting for dinosaurs, the only reality of Nato remains the gigantic military machine of costly installations, bases, pipelines and airfields sprawling across half the world, occupation divisions and planned Nazi rearmament, all under American command, with the openly proclaimed aim of nuclear warfare even in 'minor' wars. All this, no less than the breakdown of the disarmament talks, shows how serious the fight for peace still is. But there is no doubt that the entire climate of discussion has changed. The formerly so aggressive apostles of the cold war and arms race are now on the defensive and apologetic. More and more, all serious and responsible opinion is seeking for an alternative course. It might be said that the battle for the principle of peaceful co-existence has already been won, even though the consequent essential practical changes in policy (disarmament, banning of

nuclear weapons, ending of colonial wars, removal of strategic trade bans, recognition of China in the United Nations, replacement of sectional military alliances by European and Asian collective security, etc.) are still resisted in practice and have still to be achieved. But the road towards these aims has opened out more favourably than at any previous moment. The new world situation has brought within the view of all the practical possibility of the fulfilment of the aim of peaceful co-existence and the banishing of the menace of a third world war.

Harvest of the Twentieth Congress

If it is asked what has made possible these striking changes in the climate of international relations, discussion and opinion, which have made themselves felt at an accelerating pace over these past three years, and which today are universally agreed to be opening out new and hopeful perspectives, there can be no question of the answer. The answer lies in the profound underlying changes of the world situation which were highlighted at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The answer lies in the increasing peaceful strength, manifest invincibility, success of economic construction and scientific advance of the socialist world, constituting close on two-fifths of mankind. The answer lies in the sweeping advance of the former colonial peoples, with India in the forefront, to fulfil an independent world rôle on the side of peace and the extension of friendly relations with the socialist countries for peace and economic co-operation. The answer lies, not least, in the positive and constructive response of the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist world to the new possibilities and opportunities arising from this changed balance of the world situation: the bold new initiatives for peace and the improvement of international relations; the far-reaching and imaginative planning for new economic achievement and the extension of international economic aid; and, as an integral part of this, the most drastic self-criticism and review in the internal field to lay bare and correct whatever required correction from the preceding period, in order to liberate the fullest creative forces of Marxism and the peoples for the era before us.

The Great Renewal

This gigantic process of review, correction and renewal, extending to every field, of political and legal structure and administration, of party organisation and methods of leadership, of ideology and

research, and also of policy, both economic and in the field of international relations, has been developing over the past three years in the Soviet Union since the death of Stalin, and reached a high culminating point at the Twentieth Congress in February, in a way which has held the attention of the world. It has extended, and is extending, through all the countries of the socialist world. Every day brings significant new developments. A mighty process has been set in motion, which is itself a reflection of the maturity of socialism that such changes (including corrections of certain serious deformations and violations of essential principles of socialist and party democracy) has become possible, and possible without internal convulsions. The process that has been set in motion is still sweeping forward, and will assuredly bring many further and beneficial changes. It is of profound significance, not only for the socialist world, but for the whole international working class movement and for the entire field of international relations. This renewal and correction is not only helping the development of the socialist world. It is also encouraging and stimulating a new attitude on the part of the non-socialist world to promote a more favourable atmosphere for friendly relations and peaceful co-existence. The Twentieth Congress has itself become a powerful factor in the new world situation.

Indivisible Whole

This review, correction and renewal is an integral and indispensable part of the whole new approach and vast new perspectives opened by the Twentieth Congress. It is evident from correspondence received that some incidental remarks made in last month's Notes (p. 192, lines 2-10), referring to this aspect of the Congress, were unfortunately worded in such a way as to give rise to justifiable criticism. It was not the purpose of these very incidental remarks in nine lines to deal with this aspect of the Congress, but only to explain why the broadest mass issues of the 'Great Debate' now opening, which it was the subject of last month's Notes to discuss, turned on the 'larger' questions of the future of peace, the transition to socialism, and unity of the labour movement, and that the special questions of the analysis of the past in relation to the rôle of Stalin or the abuses of the security organs in a preceding period, however intense the discussion of them among more limited sections, should not be emphasised at the expense of the great issues of the present and the future.

A Welcome to Criticism

But it is clear from letters of criticism received from valued readers, to whom we express our thanks, that the character of these remarks caused offence and that it was unsatisfactory to treat the question in this fashion. The attempt to correct one unbalance led to another. The treatment created the impression first, of counterposing the self-critical aspects of the Congress to the 'larger' issues of the future perspective; second, of summarily brushing aside the grave questions involved under cover of historical generalities; third, of discounting or appearing to treat contemptuously the shock caused by the gravity of the revelations and the inevitable emotional feelings aroused; and fourth, and most serious, of appearing to treat the questions as only questions of the past and therefore to underestimate the profound present and future significance of the questions of principle involved and the lessons to be drawn for the whole working class movement. We accordingly owe all our apologies to our readers for having unwittingly created such an impression by these incidental remarks, and hasten to endeavour to repair the damage by treating a little more fully some of the major questions involved.

From the Past to the Future

It would be undoubtedly mistaken and misleading to endeavour to separate the drastic review of the past and self-criticism at the Twentieth Congress from the inspiring and breath-taking perspectives for the future of socialism, peace and human advance held out at the same Congress, as if they were negative and positive aspects of the Congress. There can be no question here of saying that 'on the one hand' the Congress presented most grievous revelations with regard to a past period which could only cause pain, but that 'on the other hand' the Congress presented with a sure and factually justified self-confidence most positive perspectives for the future, both for communist construction, and for peace and the prospects of the working class movement and socialism, which could only cause joy. The two aspects are inseparable parts of a single whole. It is precisely the drastic review and self-criticism that helps to lay the basis, not only for the practical correction of defects, malpractices and shortcomings revealed in the preceding period, but for the re-assertion of the basic principles of Marxism and Leninism, the enormous strengthening of socialist and party democracy, and thereby the liberation of all the creative forces of

the people and their Communist Party, and of living Marxism, with its inherent ceaseless criticism and discussion, from certain straight-jacket conditions which had grown up in a specific period and had become a dangerous impediment to growth and to the true freedom which is the heart of Communism.

Indispensable Review

Hence it was essential to carry through the drastic review, the reassessment in relation to the rôle of Stalin in his later period, and the ruthless uncovering of serious evils, violations of certain essential principles of party collective leadership and functioning, and of socialist legality, and arising out of these conditions, the criminal misdeeds which accompanied and stained an era of heroic achievement and basically correct policy. This review was no mere post-mortem on the past. It was the indispensable basis for the approach to the tasks of the present and the future. History will deal in due time, through the successive work of future historians, with the final assessment, or attempted final assessment (for it may well be that controversy will long rage, and pass through many phases yet) of this era of two decades of such unique significance for the future of humanity, its achievements and shortcomings, its policies and personalities, its glories and its shames.

Verdict of History

Future history will assuredly not fail to pay tribute to the epic accomplishment of this period, the completion of the construction of socialism, the withstanding of the onslaught of the Nazi blitzkrieg before which every other army had fallen, the joint victory over fascism, and the speed of reconstruction from the heaviest devastation ever known, under the conditions of the perpetual menace and harassment of the cold war from the war-enriched and unscathed United States. Future history will not fail to pay tribute to the heroism, unity and heaven-storming achievement of the Soviet people through these ordeals, the policy and leadership of the party, and the genius, unyielding courage, steadfastness and devotion to the revolution of Stalin, also in this later period when black pages blotted the record, and when some of his very virtues turned to defects, his steel-hardness to harshness, his unwavering shouldering of responsibility to methods of personal leadership, and his vigilance and suspicion, indispensable in every true revolutionary, to an increasingly violent frenzy which caused executions, not only

of counter-revolutionary enemies and agents, but also of friends and comrades.

Great Principles at Issue

It was not the task of the Twentieth Congress to anticipate the final verdict of history. The task of the Twentieth Congress was to bring out and emphasise precisely what was negative in the record, because it was this that required to be corrected and to be made known in order that it should be corrected. Hence the misleading appearance of an unbalanced emphasis, as has sometimes been suggested in some criticisms of the treatment, of the negative aspects of Stalin's record (although in fact it is evident, from the summaries which have been made available, that the Report to the private session of the Congress did in fact pay full tribute to the rôle of Stalin as the strongest Marxist leader after the death of Lenin, and to his leading rôle in maintaining the unity of the party against disruption and faction, in the accomplishment of industrialisation and in the collectivisation of agriculture). There was no unbalanced emphasis in relation to the task in hand. The task of the Congress was, not to make the final balanced assessment of the scholar in his study, but to fulfil an urgent practical need, to complete the review and correction of shortcomings and grave abuses which had already been conducted by the Central Committee during the preceding three years, to draw in the entire membership of the party and the Soviet people to full knowledge and participation in this review, reassessment and correction, and thereby to re-establish essential principles of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice which had been violated. It is these principles, of collective leadership and functioning of the party, of inner-party democracy and the methods of democratic centralism, of socialist democracy and legality, of the combination of freedom with planned organisation and unity, and of the creative critical spirit of Marxism as against dogmatism and routinism, that are brought into the forefront of attention by this review and the discussions arising therefrom, and that are of such vital urgency, not merely within the countries of socialism, but in the working class movement of all countries, for the fulfilment of the tasks of the present and the advance to the future.

Personal Rule?

Was Stalin a 'dictator', a 'tyrant', or (as the *Daily Herald*, somewhat oddly 'summarising' the recent British Communist Executive statement on the issues, announces) a 'scoundrel'? Were

those associated with him or communists in other countries 'servile sycophants' prostrated before a supposed 'infallible idol'? This current melodramatic press picture is a travesty of the most serious, critical and, incidentally, iconoclastic movement in human history, the revolutionary communist movement. The real situation and problem which arose, and which was summarised in the Twentieth Congress formula as the 'cult of the individual', was of a very different character from these novelette-style vapourings. There was here no parallel with the traditional forms of one-man rule, with Bonapartism or the Fuehrerprinzip or fascist dictatorship. There was here no question of a proclamation of a constitution placing all power in the hands of one man, of an Emperor or a Leader, as the sole repository of power, from whom all authority is declared to spring (the authoritarian principle). On the contrary. The unique and peculiar character of the situation which arose during this period was that nothing was changed in the basis of class power, the socialist soviet power of the working people who had expropriated the capitalists and landlords, constructed socialism and were advancing to communism. The party continued to lead the people. Nor was the main basic policy incorrect. This was the very period when the Webbs were describing the 'multiform democracy' of the Soviet Union as the widest participation of the largest numbers of ordinary men and women in the administration of their affairs that had ever been evolved. And it was true. Without this the gigantic creative achievement of the Soviet people throughout this period would never have been possible. The evils that arose affected primarily the functioning of the apparatus rather than the essence of the class power of the working people, although the violation of collective leadership had also harmful effects in particular spheres of policy, as in relation to agriculture and the break with Yugoslavia. Throughout this period, despite all the evils, the masses of the people were continuing to enjoy and exercise self-rule in running their affairs to a degree unknown in any capitalist democracy, and continuing to justify Lenin's description of Soviet democracy as the highest form of democracy yet known.

Personal and Collective Leadership

What, then, went wrong? What happened was that in a period of heavy strain after the rise of fascism, of continual war or threat-of-war conditions, the practice of leadership began to depart from the correct constitutional forms. During this period after fascism

—not previously, not therefore inherently in the system of Soviet democracy or democratic centralism—Stalin, on the basis of the unique and well-earned theoretical and practical authority and mass influence he had won through his previous record of wise and successful Marxist leadership in the battle against disruption and for the victorious construction of socialism, began to operate new methods of working which departed from the methods of Lenin and the previous practice of the Communist Party. The change developed, not in a moment, not by decree, but step by step, at first without general realisation, after the Seventeenth Congress in 1934. With close lines of direct contact with the masses (the collective farms, factories, shock brigades, etc., began to send their messages and reports and pledges directly to him as the embodiment of the party instead of to the Central Committee), and with the widest party and non-party masses looking to him as the wisest and ablest revolutionary leader in whom they felt full confidence, Stalin entered on the dangerous path of beginning increasingly to take major decisions in his individual capacity, without waiting for the endorsement of committee consultations. The machinery of the meetings of the central committee and congresses ceased to function regularly. This was the essence of the ‘cult of the individual’ which is often distorted in the vulgarised press treatment as if it were expressed in the ‘adulation’ of a great individual. The sometimes moving, sometimes flowery and distasteful eulogies were a symptomatic excrescence (though not without considerably more solid foundation than is usual in such cases). But the essence of the ‘cult of the individual’ was the violation of collective leadership.

Collective Leadership and the Security Organs

This situation, which could have been corrected under normal conditions by reference to the rules, was complicated in these emergency conditions by the fact that the rôle of the security organs was correctly and necessarily enlarged to meet the increased menace of enemy penetration, but that, under the influence of Stalin’s theory of the intensification of the class struggle after the victory of socialism, these powers began to be exercised in extreme forms, and with illegal means, and fell into the hands of criminal controllers who used them, not only against enemy agents and traitors, but against all elements expressing or suspected of opposition or criticism, including some of the finest revolutionary comrades with outstanding records who were unjustly executed or imprisoned.

Once this combined situation had developed, of Stalin's personal methods of leadership, his overwhelming mass influence and popularity, the abuse of the security organs, and the constant external menace and emergency conditions, a unique problem had arisen in which to have opened a direct battle against the character of Stalin's personal leadership could have meant the visible danger of a factional fight disrupting the party, tearing the country in two, opening the front to the enemy and wrecking the revolution. Hence it was not until after a very serious prolongation of this phase that the problem could be effectively tackled. But the essence of the problem was the violation of collective leadership, and the question of the abuses of the security organs should not be separated from this. Once collective leadership was restored there was no difficulty in establishing full control over the security organs and restoring and strengthening the effective functioning of socialist democracy.

Was it Inevitable?

'To understand all is to forgive all', says the French proverb. But in the revolutionary movement there can be no forgiveness for what goes wrong, even where its causes can be understood. It is inevitable in general that no revolution in real life can correspond to some idealist dream of one hundred per cent. perfection, that in every revolution there will be, not only achievement, but also excesses and abuses, not only heroes, but also malefactors. We can glory that the revolution has conquered in spite of all. But no particular evil, shortcoming or abuse in its course is therefore inevitable or to be excused, least of all, such serious abuses as took place during the twenty years under review. It is sometimes suggested that the elements of social backwardness inherited from pre-revolutionary Russia, with the still recent advance to the victory of socialism, created the conditions for the retrogressive tendencies expressed in the 'cult of the individual'. There is a measure of truth in this, but only in part. For the survivals of backwardness were even more present during the period 1917-34, during which these evils did not arise.

External Backwardness

Hence we must also see the external conditions of backwardness in Western and Central Europe expressed in the victory of fascism, which created an unparalleled problem and ordeal for the new socialist state, a menace compared to which the wars of intervention

were child's play. It was under those conditions that it was evidently judged necessary to weld and strengthen the solidarity of the entire people, including the peasant masses most recently emerging from backwardness to socialism, not merely with the appeal of socialism and soviet loyalty and the party, but with every appeal, the national and patriotic appeal, the religious appeal for all attached to the church, and the personal symbol of the régime of the working people embodied in the leadership of Stalin. The name of Stalin inspired confidence and heroism among countless millions. But experience revealed that this method of political leadership, however understandable in the period in which it arose (and when it bore a corresponding significance as an expression of the solidarity of the international communist movement) entailed grave shortcomings in practice, which required to be corrected. These corrections have now been made.

Our Responsibility

Let us never forget that fascism arose, not through the fault of the Soviet people, but through our weakness, in our movements in Western and Central Europe, that we never carried through the socialist revolution alongside them, but opened the gates to the fascist monster, and then depended on their strength and sacrifice to vanquish it. They were the first to carry through the socialist revolution, to chart the unknown paths, to face and pass through limitless ordeals. Our path of transition may be easier, thanks to them, but to our shame, not to our honour. It is sometimes suggested that we should have criticised them more in the midst of their ordeals to give them the benefit of our advice on how to run things. Perhaps they might have answered, 'Show us first, dear comrades, that you know how to lead the masses, to win and hold power, and we shall be glad to learn from you'. Our responsibility was not that we failed to join the ranks of their critics (there was no lack of such); or even that we in good faith repeated mistaken charges emanating from sources that alone had the means and the opportunity to judge them, but which subsequent review proved to be unfounded; or that we sought so far as was in our power to inspire the enthusiasm and solidarity of our peoples for the first socialist revolution and the first socialist state. Our responsibility above all was that, with all the objective conditions ripe for socialist revolution in Western and Central Europe, such as would have solved all the problems alike for the Russian and all the peoples of Europe to march forward together

in happy and peaceful construction, we were not successful to mobilise our peoples and left them to struggle alone until their own strength opened the way to the first victories of socialism beyond the Soviet Union and the beginning of the world system of socialism.

Pains and Shocks

There are those who say that to find joy and thankfulness in the frank review, however ugly the facts revealed, in the reassessment and the new perspective opened by the Twentieth Congress is to show callousness to the pain which must be felt for those who died unjustly, or indifference to the horror which must be felt for the revelation of criminal actions and violations of justice in a socialist society. Their vision is too short. We know also the pain of the millions who have died through capitalism, and the daily millionfold injustice of capitalist society, and we know on which side we stand. We know that the path of revolution is not without sorrow, not merely from the external enemy, but also from within.

Darkness and Sunrise

How far does the memory of some of these questioners go, to whom these revelations seem to be felt like the first shock and anguish on a hitherto stainless shield, until they almost seem ready to join the hapless ranks of those who denounced 'the god that failed'? It was pain and anguish during the twenties to see that goodly company, as it had seemed at the time, which had led the first victorious socialist revolution break up in mortal division, with successive factional fights led against the party, until the unity of the steadfast leaders around Stalin saved the party. It was no less pain and anguish during the thirties to see so many dear friends and comrades, some of whom, like Bela Kun, have since been cleared of their sentences, revealed and proclaimed as traitors and enemy agents, until the movement seemed honeycombed with treasonable corruption. And if now the Twentieth Congress has revealed that the party was not seething with traitors and agents, that it was, on the contrary, the security organs that had got out of hand and gone wrong, that many of these dear friends and comrades were not traitors and agents, that although they suffered cruel and unjust deaths their revolutionary honour stands high, then some younger comrades must forgive the 'callousness' of some of us longer in the movement that this feels, not like the end of the

world, not like 'the god that failed', but like the sunrise breaking through the clouds and the dawn of a new day.

Learning the Lessons

Above all, let us learn the lessons and strive to apply them for our own movement and for the future. The review and the reassessment at the Twentieth Congress, no less than the positive perspectives held out, have undoubtedly a very wide international significance for the working class movement in all countries. It has emphasised, not only the new world situation and the new opportunities that are opening out, but the fresh and flexible and imaginative approach that is necessary, with ruthless self-criticism of our own weaknesses, in order to respond to the new opportunities. It has given a stimulus to the development of creative Marxism in place of superficial routine thinking and clinging to readymade formulas. It has helped to remove many obstacles to closer mutual understanding and co-operation of all sections of the working class, at the same time as its whole teaching has emphasised, not in opposition to this aim of unity, but in integral association with it, the indispensable rôle of a strongly based Marxist-Leninist party of the working class, the Communist Party, to act as the vanguard for the whole movement. Within Britain we can feel the new tide that is stirring, not only in the field of industry, with the marked militant advances, but also, despite the difficulties of the present situation within the political labour movement, in the political field, as partially shown in the local elections. There is the beginning of a new climate, not only in international relations, but within the labour movement in Britain. Within the Communist Party the process of renovation and democratic strengthening is sweeping forward. Within broad sections of the labour movement the discussions for co-operation and a new policy extend. The recent contribution of G. D. H. Cole, rebutting the contention of the Socialist International Bureau that socialism and communism have nothing in common, is a welcome sign of the times. If Sir Winston Churchill in his eighty-second year can respond, from his standpoint, along new and constructive lines to meet a new world situation, let us hope that we in the British Labour Movement can also respond in a new and constructive fashion to the much greater opportunities that are within our reach in order to advance with united strength to the fulfilment of the tasks before us.

May 16, 1956.

R.P.D.

AFTER THE VISIT

QUÆSTOR

THE visit of Bulganin and Khrushchov to Great Britain in April, 1956, was a new and historic landmark in the advance of the worldwide struggle for peace. This may sound a far-reaching claim, but careful examination of the facts will show that it is not exaggerated.

So far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it had shown by a series of initiatives this year that it refused to regard the barren ending of the Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers last November as anything worse than a temporary interruption. Such were the letters exchanged by Bulganin with Eisenhower (January) on the need to press ahead with disarmament negotiations: such was the emphasis laid at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (February), by Khrushchov and others, on their conviction that war is nowadays not inevitable, and that countries with differing social systems 'can do more than exist side by side': they can co-operate: such again were the new disarmament proposals tabled in London (March 27). An earnest of these intentions were the political and economic agreements signed with the Danish and Swedish Prime Ministers, after their tours of the U.S.S.R. (March and April): and the trade agreements signed in the same months by Mikoyan with the governments of several Asian countries, during his tour. Great popular interest was aroused in the U.S.S.R. itself by the foundation of a United Nations Association (March 28). On the very eve of the London talks the Soviet Government declared its readiness to support United Nations measures to secure peace in the Palestine area.

In Britain, for the first time since the war, the sterile outcome of the Foreign Ministers' meeting produced the first signs of that repudiation of 'partisanship' for which the Labour Party rank and file has been loudly pressing in recent years. Lord Chorley said that 'more blame for the failure lies upon the Western Powers than upon the U.S.S.R.' (December), while Alfred Robens said that the Western Powers by their conduct had 'made deadlock certain' (March). Continuously growing popular discontent with the financial and economic consequences of ten years of anti-Soviet policy had already (early February) enabled Eden to brush aside the attacks of Tory 'backwoods' M.P.s and their vociferous press—particularly the *Daily Telegraph*—on the proposed visit,

when the pronouncements of the 20th Congress in favour of peaceful construction ('let us trade' rather than 'let us arm') fell upon responsive British ears at the end of the month. How deep was that response could be seen from the tumultuous welcome given by the British working class during the next few weeks, to Malenkov.

It was very soon after this welcome, in fact, that the visit of Bulganin and Khrushchov began: and the most blatant efforts were made by the authorities in this country to prevent their being received with similar cordiality. A campaign of vile attacks on the Soviet Union, and personally on these two leaders, was begun long before the Soviet guests arrived by most of the newspapers and kept up by two or three of them until the very end of the visit. Rarely has such calculated boorishness been displayed by Fleet Street. Furthermore, the authorities first made it clear that the anti-Soviet émigrés from Eastern Europe would be given full freedom to demonstrate, and then used this as the excuse for 'security' measures aimed at keeping the general public as far from the Soviet leaders as possible. But worst of all, the programme for their visit was devised and trimmed in such a way as to keep them out of any factory, or factory area, of such large cities as London and Birmingham, to exclude them from Glasgow and South Wales altogether, and to prevent them mingling elsewhere with the working class majority of the people of these islands—in pubs, homes, farms and offices, to which many letters had invited them. So gross and open was this policy, indeed, that the Soviet leaders had to issue a special statement of regret on the subject (April 9): and the Birmingham press published a strong protest from the officers of the Midland Federation of Trades Councils (April 16).

Of course, it was obvious why the government had arranged things in this way. It would have been sufficient for the Soviet leaders to show themselves in a South Wales mining valley, or in the Clydeside shipyards, or any big engineering works in Birmingham or railway depot in London, for the workers to have greeted them with the same enthusiasm as Malenkov. The ordinary people everywhere would have followed suit. The Fleet Street-Scotland Yard spell would have been broken. And the Government would have been 'embarrassed' in its negotiations.

As it was, the *Manchester Guardian* (April 19) blurted out that the crowds which gathered at Victoria to welcome the visitors were 'much bigger than anyone expected': and most of its contemporaries broke all records of newspaper indecency by concealing from their readers the Press Association report of the great cheering

crowds there. In evident alarm at such a beginning, real hard lying was the rule from then onwards—playing down the cheers, inflating the émigré and home-grown Fascist boos. No one can say that the capitalist-owned newspapers did not dutifully back up the Government in making applause for Bulganin and Khrushchov as unpopular as they could—those very same newspapers which, a few months before, had competed with each other in challenging the Soviet visitors to ‘see us British as we really are—play a game of darts at the local, mingle with the housewives shopping’, and so forth.

And yet, in spite of it all, they failed. The boasts of such papers as the *Daily Telegraph* (April 27) and the *Economist* (April 28)—about the ‘coolness’ of the reception and things ‘from Mr. Khrushchov’s point of view’ going wrong—were merely whistling to keep their courage up. The roaring cheers drowning a few Fascist squeaks at Victoria and the Mansion House, in the densely packed streets outside Oxford Town Hall and in the Birmingham Central Square: the crowds standing for hours in these places to applaud: the shouting and waving all along the route as the leave-parties from the Soviet warships at Portsmouth drove every day through Southern England and on through London to Highgate Cemetery—all brought to nought the most determined efforts of the millionaire press and its government. The British people broke through.

To some extent, of course, this was due to the circumstances attending the visit. Some of them have been mentioned already. No less relevant was the publication—on the very day that B. and K. arrived—of the new Budget: £1,500 millions on ‘Defence’ as before, nearly a third of the total, with its accompaniment of a rise in the price of bread and tobacco, and the cost of living index taking a further two-point jump to 55 per cent. above June, 1947. But mainly it was the news itself that neutralised what the old socialist song used to call ‘the poison of the press’: above all, the speeches of Khrushchov and Bulganin themselves, acquainting many millions of British men and women *for the first time* with the arguments for peaceful co-existence uttered often enough by the Soviet leaders before, but sedulously kept from the readers of British newspapers until now.

Take Khrushchov’s speech at the Soviet Embassy on April 19:

We have come to you with honest hearts, guided by the hope of achieving an improvement in relations between our countries. You, gentlemen, do not like Communism. We know this, and we do not hide the fact that

we do not like capitalism: but we must live in peace.

Of course, we do not demand from you any particular love towards us. However, you cannot but recognise the fact that such a great country as the Soviet Union exists. And that country wants peace, not war. As they say, you have to live with the neighbour God has sent you, not with the neighbour you would like to have.

We do not want to persuade you to adopt our system, and give up the capitalist system. It is also not worth your while to try to persuade us to give up our socialist system. It is clear to you, I think, that if you try to put pressure on us and demand from us the impossible, nothing will come of it. We also have no illusions about this. What then must be the way out? There is only one way out—peaceful co-existence.

Or his speech at the Greenwich Royal Naval College the next day:

After the second world war, which we concluded victoriously, in co-operation with each other, we unfortunately drifted apart. We regret very much that common ties which were established during the struggle against our common enemy were not retained during the post-war years. The purpose of our visit is to try and do away with the obstacles that have arisen, to try to build up confidence between our countries, confidence that in time will grow into real friendship.

The expression might be out of place, but I should think it would not be of much use to our peoples if we were to stand facing each other like fighting cocks, you united in Nato and we in the Warsaw Pact. And for the time being, that is the way it is.

What would that lead to? It would simply lead to more and greater military expenditure, exhaustion of the exchequer and diversion of funds that could well be used for the welfare of the people.

Can anyone doubt that this passage in his speech at the British Industries Fair on April 23, went home?

We know of the efficiency of British industry. Your machine-tool industry, for example, is well developed. Our country could buy machine-tools from you. That would be of benefit both to you and to us. Instead of spending our efforts on producing some of the machine-tools we need, we could buy them from you.

But since you won't sell them to us, we have to organise their production ourselves. Of course, this entails additional expense on organising their production, but in the long run we build the machine-tools we need, and you lose valuable orders for our industry.

It was in this atmosphere—of attempts to create an artificial atmosphere of 'absolute zero' around the conversations, on the one hand, and of plain blunt talking at Downing Street and Chequers on the other—that the negotiations proceeded. Hopes ran high among the enemies of peace, that nothing would come of it all. As late as April 25, the *Daily Telegraph* front page headlines ran: 'Russian Talks Disappoint. Visitors Misjudge Mood of Britain'. In the United States things were even worse: all through the

negotiations 'reporting has been fixedly anti-Russian', the *Observer* Washington correspondent reported (April 29). But the ill-wishers were disappointed—even after the extraordinary incident of the Labour Party Executive's dinner to the Soviet guests (April 23).

On this it is necessary only to point out one thing. Whatever may be thought of the Labour Party leaders' manners, they threw away a great opportunity to promote and protect the cause of world peace—and not for the first time. No one can take seriously the story that the Labour Party leaders simply had to place the case of imprisoned Social-Democrats before the Soviet guests then and there: they could have had a special meeting for the purpose (as was shown on the morning of April 26)—and could have discussed also the position of Communists jailed in Malaya and elsewhere in the British Empire by the Labour Government. But what cannot fail to come to mind is the precedent set by Mr. Herbert Morrison when he became Foreign Secretary in 1951, and was offered a whole page in *Pravda* to fill as he liked. Instead of grasping at the chance to start a new phase in Anglo-Soviet relations by some constructive arguments and suggestions, he displayed the same fine intelligence and subtle political skill as his successful rival, Mr. Gaitskell, five years later—by using the occasion to denounce the Soviet Government at enormous length, apparently in the belief that this would do some good to the cause of Transport House. Elephantine ineptitude had the same result on both occasions. Labour's rank and file had been badly served by its leaders.

In spite of all these varied obstacles, the two sides came to agreement, embodied in the Joint Statement of April 27. In importance, as a basis on which the friends of peace can work today (though not of course in formal terms) it has replaced the former Anglo-Soviet Treaty. In varied ways all the leader articles in their editorial comments, paid more or less grudging tribute to the achievement it represents. But the truest verdict was that of the *Daily Herald*—still smarting, doubtless, after well-deserved buffets from the rank and file following the Executive's dinner. It was startled into calling the document 'one of the most important state papers of our time'. And so it is.

The Anglo-Soviet statement signed by Eden and Bulganin (i) recognises that the strengthening of Anglo-Soviet relations 'would be in the interests of the people of both countries', (ii) declares that better Anglo-Soviet relations 'would help to consolidate *general* peace and security', (iii) undertakes that both Governments will

'work for a further relaxation of international tension', (iv) accepts three principles—national independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of others—as the basis of friendly co-operation and 'peaceful co-existence of all countries, irrespective of their social systems' (the first time Tory hand has been set to those unhallowed words), (v) pledges both sides to 'do their utmost to put an end to the armaments race in all parts of the world', (vi) proclaims that 'peace and security in Europe are of determining importance in preserving the peace of the world', (vii) provides for a number of practical steps to promote peace and security (through the United Nations) in the Near and Middle East, (viii) recognises 'the necessity of reaching an agreement to start without delay upon practical measures for a substantial reduction of armed forces under appropriate international control', *beginning* with the Big Five, (ix) agreed to study carefully a large Soviet shopping list, totalling some £1,000 millions in five years 'if there were no trade restrictions or discrimination', (x) agrees on a programme of developing contacts between the two countries, similar to that offered by Molotov at Geneva on November 16 (see the January *Labour Monthly*).

The importance of this agreed statement was that it opened up remarkable prospects for the future. And this was confirmed before that very day was out—by the public request of Bulganin (at his press conference) that the British Government should help in promoting better Soviet relations with the U.S.A.: by his announcement, on the same occasion, of Eden's agreement to visit Moscow, at a date to be fixed later: by Eden's broadcast announcement, the same evening, that about two thirds of the shopping list 'is not affected by restrictions at all', and that on examination 'the percentage may turn out to be even higher': and no less by his firm reply: 'I utterly disagree' to some who 'say there is no use in making such agreements'. This was particularly important. It was a plain reply to the powerful die-hard interests whose spokesman was the *Daily Telegraph* all through the negotiations: even on April 27 it called the latter 'dangerous and largely unproductive junketings'. But it was equally a reply to their warmongering (and still more influential) American patrons—who had already received a stinging chastisement, quite early on from *The Times* (April 21) for their 'boasts about military power, declarations that policy has at times to be carried to the brink of war and rejections of any desire to talk'.

Undoubtedly, therefore, the outcome of the Anglo-Soviet talks

Looking at China . . . by Paul Hogarth



Hankow



The Anshan Steelworker

marks a defeat for the warmongers and new prospects for world peace unequalled since 1945. To be precise, this is no ordinary success: it is the result of a coming-together of various forces—the pressure of the working class and the various movements consciously working for peace, of the unorganised ‘little man’, whom ever-rising prices and taxes threaten with bankruptcy, and of that substantial section of the capitalist class itself which sees mounting perils in being dragged at the tail of the Wall Street chariot. Yet of all these it is the Labour movement which has most power and cohesion. To look over the resolutions submitted to Labour Party Conference during recent years is to see immediately on what issues, fully fitting into the framework of the Anglo-Soviet statement, the strength of British Labour could ensure its early implementation:

- i. An early agreement to reduce armed forces and conventional weapons to levels proposed by Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. in 1954 and 1955.
- ii. The banning of hydrogen and atom bomb tests, as a preliminary step to eliminating these horror weapons.
- iii. A European Security Treaty—at first of the simplest kind, between Nato and Warsaw, and then developing further.
- iv. The ending of trade discrimination and senseless restrictions.

In recent weeks, the doctrine, frequently put forward in these columns, that the peoples now have their independent part to play in foreign policy, has found unexpected support. ‘Hundreds of millions of people who have never weighed anything at all in the affairs of the world are now accessible to political speeches and political education; they are beginning to count and they will count more and more’. Thus spoke Lieut.-Gen. Sir John Glubb (late of the Arab Legion) on April 28—and he ought to know. The Anglo-Soviet Statement of April 27 provides an unprecedented opportunity for the British Labour movement, by pressing for its fulfilment in detail, to put itself at the head of those hundreds of millions, for the good of ‘the affairs of the world’.

In our July issue we hope to print a special article on ‘Civil Liberty and Socialism’, by D. N. Pritt, Q.C.

NO AUTOMATION WITHOUT CONSULTATION

REG BIRCH*

THE deliberations of the Amalgamated Engineering Union National Committee, the policy-making body of rank and file members working at the trade, always create a deal of speculation and comment, informed and uninformed, by the press, B.B.C. and others, before, during and after it. This is partly because it is one of the earliest trade union conferences of the year (it met in the last week of April and the first week of May), but more properly because of the enormous power, prestige and influence of the Amalgamated Engineering Union in the labour movement. This year, the unprecedented publicity in every newspaper and on the radio and television is due to something more. What this was and how important was reflected (*after the National Committee decisions*) in the Prime Minister's statement in Parliament on May 10, when he announced a forthcoming report on 'the technical, social and economic implications of automation'.

The clarity and boldness of this National Committee's declarations (some of them, necessarily, *ad interim*) has, I believe, strengthened our membership, heartened the labour movement and startled the employing class. Consider the decisions on this same vexed question of Automation:

This National Committee instructs the Executive Council to make a study of the extent, progress, economic and social implications of automation and to submit a report to a recalled meeting of this National Committee, for the purpose of formulating national policy on this issue and of inaugurating an educational publicity campaign amongst the membership.

Further, this National Committee requests Executive Council to secure from all District Committees details of the introduction of all new methods of automation.

Meanwhile, this National Committee declares:—

- (1) No introduction of automation without previous consultation.
- (2) No redundancy arising from introduction of automation; labour so displaced to be retained on pay-roll pending alternative work without loss of earnings.
- (3) The increased productivity resulting from these processes to be reflected in increased earnings to those involved.
- (4) Technical training in automation for all engineers.

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'No introduction of automation without previous consultation'. The reasonableness of this standpoint is now recognised even by the *Observer* and *The Times* and other newspapers. This makes the employers even more angry. It is being recognised that because of its social implications, automation cannot be regarded as a plaything of the employers. Neither is it unreasonable to say that there should be no redundancy rising from the introduction of automation, but that labour so displaced should be retained pending alternative work and without loss of earnings. That this committee means what it says is seen in a further point (No. 5) of the above decision:

We call on District Committees and Shop Stewards to insist on discussion with separate employers to ascertain plans and extent of proposed introduction of automative methods into the various establishments.

This point immediately was brought up in Parliament as a supplementary question (on May 10) to the Prime Minister, who after first affirming 'the sincerity of the House as a whole in supporting the full employment policy' went on to say 'As for the floor of the shop or factory, I feel some hesitation about replying'. The sixth and final point of these National Committee decisions ran as follows:

Finally, we instruct Executive Council to seek discussions directly with the Engineering Employers' Federation, and other National undertakings; and to call for the establishment of a tripartite committee to control the introduction and scope of automation—such a committee to consist of representatives of the trade unions, the employers and the government.

Clearly, this is the way out of the confusion caused by the incompetent and reactionary approach of the employers to the question.

There cannot be any progress without the safeguarding of labour. It is not progress to permit workers to be rendered unemployed and their families' living standards suffer. Progress must surely mean the improving of living standards; higher wages, the diminution of arduous manual toil through labour-saving devices in industry, so as to provide more leisure. Hence follows the demand for the immediate introduction of the 40-hour week and three weeks' holiday with pay.

The aptness of the present decisions of the National Committee, the promptitude and unanimity displayed, contrast well with the previous boggling of the labour movement in the past at the frightening problem of unemployment. The membership refuses

to return to the dole and means test, rejects the Tory Government's 'credit squeeze', and refuses to be panicked. Therefore, the National Committee boldly asserts, on the question of redundancy in the car industry, that it whole-heartedly welcomes the shop stewards' and members' active resistance:

This National Committee also congratulates those shop stewards and members who are actively resisting redundancy, and declares its firm support for such resistance at the point of production as it constitutes a vital and integral part of the fight for full employment and no reduction in the standard of living.

It also endorses the acumen and speed displayed by its own executive committee in dealing with the immediate problem in the motor industry:

This National Committee . . . congratulates the Executive Council on its initiative in calling a meeting of the Executives of the unions with members involved and welcomes the proposals of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions that the Government should (1) relax the credit squeeze, remove or reduce hire purchase restrictions and cut purchase tax; (2) review export difficulties; (3) institute an immediate fact-finding enquiry into the general position of the Motor and Allied Industries . . .

The employers in this field, who, for all their excessive profits, are being treated by the government a little like the poor relations of industry ('not out of the top drawer', unlike Vickers and the Shell combine), ought to welcome this clear initiative. It is in their interest, in this matter, to follow the lead given by the workers so as to preserve the industry and not be pushed out by the contrived slump. The Standard Motor Company's directors ought not to permit themselves to be jockeyed into the position of the Aunt Sallies; nor believe that the answer lies only in expensive investment in automation; but remember that their wealth has come from, and lies solely in, this enormous specialised labour skill. The answer is not that the omnibus makers shall become the omnibus conductors, nor yet that the car engineers shall become chauffeurs. This is a fantastic and childish proposition—which has not prevented it being put forward by muddle-headed 'economists'.

The fact that the engineering employers have already commented on the National Committee's proposed wage claim even before it has been made, is a warning, if one be needed, to our members and all engineering workers of the struggle ahead. After all, we must remember the scurvy treatment of the employers on the women's wage claim and the intransigent attitude of the government on the demand for an enquiry. Of whom are they afraid—

the employers or the workers? The need for a substantial increase is self-evident; and the National Committee stands firmly on this issue :

This National Committee places on record the determination of this Union to pursue the claim that the minimum rate of women shall be not less than the male labourer's rate.

We register our vigorous protest at the conduct of the Engineering Employers' Federation in flagrantly ignoring the negotiating machinery within the industry.

This National Committee, speaking in the name of our nearly one million membership, endorses and emphasises the demand that the Minister of Labour immediately set up a Committee of Enquiry on this matter.

The scandalous make-up of the wage packet shows the pressing need for consolidation. It is not generally known that today the skilled pieceworker's wages are made up of 66/- basic wage on which all his piecework earnings are calculated, with a plus-up of the static figure of 83/4d. This is topsy turvy. The declaration of the National Committee to pursue a policy of consolidation of all future claims is not only wise but a matter of pressing urgency.

The amalgam of all the thought and discussion throughout the branches of this mighty union contributed to the making of a balanced policy on most problems confronting the working class. For they not only considered matters domestic to the union. In the field of what may be termed 'politics' they dealt wisely also. They demanded the banning of all atom bomb tests; the withdrawal of troops from Kenya, Malaya and Cyprus and the support for self-determination for these peoples; the call for the immediate reduction of national service to 12 months and the pressing for its ultimate abolition. Finally there was the statesmanlike dealing by the National Committee with the problems surrounding the controversy round the treasurership of the Labour Party and the insistence that Labour Party delegates of this Union be not prevented by the Executive Committee from voting in accordance with the national policy of the union. Above all, the understanding by National Committee delegates of world problems, was displayed in their demand for the admission of China into the United Nations and freedom to trade with this great nation and all others.

This, then, is the pattern, clear, sound and bold. It is a pattern made, in almost all cases, by unanimous decisions. The influence of this Union and its decisions will assist in uniting with other trade unions in an onward march. Great are the opportunities and great is the strength to use them.

THE DEVIL'S DILEMMA

IVOR MONTAGU

O0.00. Zero Hour. The war is about to begin and you are Commander-in-chief. What do you do? What orders do you give? Consideration of this question immediately discloses to the most unprofessional amongst us the diabolical dilemma before the most eager of those Sandhurst stalwarts who used to prate so glibly of 'shooting-parties' and the like. What order do you give for defence? There isn't any. What for attack? What dare you do that may not bring the oddest and most uncomfortable consequences whose limits no man can foresee. No wonder the Defence White Paper* says that the need will be for Her Majesty's forces to be 'flexible' and 'versatile'. It speaks obscurely of the need for them to be highly trained and skilled. Ready for anything, in fact. A South Sea Bubble strategy—'prepared, nobody to know for what'. Improvisation will be the Order of the Day.

It was supposed to be a criticism of the generals that they were forever 'preparing for the last war', whichever it was. Now they have not even the satisfaction of pretending to do that. The machine-gun was perhaps the crucial novelty in World War I, and the tank was brought in to counter it. To negate the tank and the strong-point in World War II, the Soviet Army restored artillery (including Katusha and the mechanised cannon) as the Queen of Battles, and Montgomery pinned his faith to the productivity chart, outweighing your opponent by the weight of everything combined.

But now, nobody knows. Guided missiles are outdating armour. Thermonuclear flash, thermonuclear fall-out and thermonuclear bangs are rapidly outdating ground forces of any kind, save such as are prepared to dwell, and perhaps indefinitely, some way under ground. Generals, those perpetual schoolboys, whose only sign of growing up is that they now play with live soldiers instead of lead, will have their manoeuvres, and General Sir Richard Gale, C.-in-C. Northern Army Group (that is, the British troops in Germany), cheerfully describing to *The Times* correspondent (April 16) how all his plans are founded on the employment of a 'tactical' atomic weapon exploded in the air so as to cause such little radioactivity that 'troops could safely pass through the devastated area two and a half minutes after the explosion', threw no light whatever on what

*Statement on Defence. Cmd. 9691. H.M.S.O. 1s. 3d.

he expected them to be able to do if the unkind enemy was so unsportsmanlike as to use some other sort.

Naval strategy is in the same mess. Completely at sea. Ships are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. They are the means of ensuring the receipt of food by an island, transfer of troops, and their maintenance away from, an island. In two world wars the navy of the islanders has had to cope with submarines, and escort the foodships, troopships, oilships and munition ships to their destinations. But now the problem is entirely different. The escort and its worries are out of date. Khrushchov could turn up at Portsmouth with a cruiser fitted out up to the minute with every invention that could make any splenetic admiral's heart glow like his braid. And cheerfully offer to sell it to the business men of Birmingham, so far as the usefulness, or value in secrecy, of any of its devices is concerned. A mere dozen or score of what are now well-nigh conventional atomic bombs scattered even as near-misses around the ports, and there would be no destinations left for the convoys to travel to, no sufficient means of unloading food enough for the 50 million, even when it arrives. Another handful or so and any expeditionary force is cut off at both ends of its supply line.

As for air war—is it going to be possible at all, in the old sense? It is not merely a question of the speed of jet fighters, or the development of guided missiles seeking an aerial target, it is something much more fundamental. Brigadier General Sir J. G. Smyth, V.C., M.P., pertinently asks jolly General Gale how large a tactical weapon has to be before it becomes strategic. It is obvious that a war fought with reliance that your opponent will see things in the same light as yourself, and (though your government has consistently refused any kind of limiting or restraining convention in relation to the use of such weapons) confine himself to using only the kind you've practised with and not resort to anything more effective (i.e. whose deleterious effects will last more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes), could not in the least be planned so cheerfully by the Nato generals if they contemplated that it might have to be fought (with all its risks) in their own fields and villages. The geography of holding the thing in a country, like Germany, full of foreigners is obviously extremely convenient for this sort of planning. Hence Nato. But air war—this is rather different. What you deliver, you get back. Suppose x and y are at war, and you are in command of x . What kind of bombs are you going to use? Conventional (e.g. 'normal' high explosive)? Tactical atomic? You will

presumably eschew thermonuclear, being yourself vulnerable to their return. What will you do—paint in large letters on the sides of your heavy bombing plane, or radio continually on some unjammed wavelength: ‘Please be patient and trust me, the planes on the way to bomb you along such and such a run-in, have got only nice kinds of bombs, none that violate M.C.C. rules’, or will you be afraid that y will take no chances and send his counter-attack with thermonuclear strategic stuff on board the moment your ambiguous tactical ‘gifts’ roar across his frontier? Perhaps any sort of air-raiding, as we have known it, between equals, is already played out altogether. *The Times* raised this question already over a year ago.

Navy, Army and Air Force—these, with their smart uniforms, are the three conventional branches of ‘Defence’. But the word, in its application to them, has become a misnomer. Montgomery says there will be inter-continental rockets with thermonuclear war-heads by 1961. Khrushchov says these will be at Soviet disposal a great deal earlier. In face of this practical development all the land, sea and air tactics that the staff-college boys can devise with their heads wrapped in wet towels appear as irrelevant as a brawl in a coffee-shop.

Of course, you, *x*, can have these things. But what if *y* has them too? However much *x* hates *y*, dare he make use of them? And the use of other weapons becomes a matter of venturing with your heart in your mouth—on the brink—hoping against hope you don’t injure your enemy enough with what you are using to provoke him into using something worse. Because, however destructive your weapons, you can’t be *sure* that, even if you do use yours first, you can utterly destroy his capacity to hit back.

The only *safe* wars (safe from the warmaker’s point of view) are wars against the unequipped. It is not without significance that, after all the sacrifices in money and living conditions consequent on conscription in the Nato countries and the Nato arms programme, sacrifices popularised as for the protection of the Nato peoples’ way of life against Communist ‘aggression’ in Europe, the operations in which Nato troops do in fact get employed turn out to be in quite other places—to quote the brave effort of the Defence White Paper to link the one thing with the other, in ‘overseas territories whose peaceful development may be threatened by subversion, whether overtly Communist or masquerading as nationalism’—namely against the pseudo-nationalist Cypriots, the crypto-Communist Kikuyu, and the Algerians, those hidden agents

of the Warsaw Pact. 'Our policemen are wonderful', every visitor to Britain is informed. 'They never carry arms'. Our soldiers are equally wonderful, they carry the arms for the police jobs. (And, in their eagerness to show their peculiar courage, and their usefulness, and that their function is not entirely out of date, the French Command, in daringly denuding Europe of French troops before West German troops have become available for its 'defence', incidentally completely exposes the myth of Soviet military menace on which both German rearmament and the whole Nato sacrifice and edifice are based).

His sense of insecurity, against any opponent capable of hitting back, is thoroughly exposed by Montgomery in his Paris press conference of April 27. Incidentally declaring essential 'a single authority with the power of instant decision' (his old Hitler-hankering), Montgomery spoke of the supreme need being defence preparation on the home front. 'In a situation where both sides had nuclear equality, the survivor would be he who had the best organised home front' (*The Times*, April 28, 1956). But how to prepare such defence? Montgomery knows perfectly well that not only is there no such defence, but that such defence is at present, and likely long to remain, impossible. Introducing the Defence White Paper the Government announced its intention to remove 12,000,000 people (one in four of the population) to safe areas. In how long? While the missile is on its way? To what areas? What part of the British Isles is safe from thermonuclear effect? And what will be the attitude of the 12,000,000, even if they find such a (non-existent) area, in face of a 36,000,000 casualty list? 'The people should be told the truth about what is happening and should believe the situation to be under control. They must receive regular information and must be told what to do', says Montgomery according to *The Times*. And yet he knows perfectly well that they are not being told the truth and cannot (from his point of view) be entrusted with knowledge of it. He must know that, up and down the country, the pitiful 'experts' who are giving lectures to Home Office Defence Volunteers, on being heckled to explain the adequacy of the brown-paper-and-shadow precautions against thermonuclear weapons that they are told to recommend, nowadays give the miserable reply that the authorities have adequate secret means of defence 'that must not be revealed'. Indeed, he himself revealed to questioners, says *The Times*, that the preparation for defence he was really thinking of was preparation for 'maintenance of broadcasting, newspaper production, etc.', in other words,

'the defence of home morale'. For him the defence of the home front is, of course, not the defence of the population—for that is not possible—but the defence of generals and government from the indignation of the survivors against those responsible for refusing to end nuclear weapons.

Does this dilemma of the warriors really eliminate the war-danger? Does the new hyper-destructivity of possible weapons eliminate, together with the old usefulness of soldiers, the risk of war? In other words, is the nuclear weapon, indeed, the conclusive deterrent that its apologists pretend? Alas, no. In logic, it might be, if all men were logical. But alas, we are dealing not with logicians, but with fallible men, in the setting of class conflict, imperialist rivalry, hostility between capitalist and socialist worlds fomented by groups unwilling to accept the necessity of co-existence. Tactics, institutions, ideas and superstructures long remain to bedevil and menace the world well after the productive relations which made them useful in a certain context have themselves altered. If anyone wants to study classical examples of what the Marxist calls 'the ideological hangover' let him study the Defence White Paper or the Four-Western-Power declaration following the conclusion of the latest stage of the work of the Disarmament Sub-Committee meeting in London. The one is an endeavour to find reasons for spending money on objects which it is obliged to admit can no longer usefully perform the functions they were supposed to fulfil. 'Cold or limited' war (including, sinisterly 'all forms' of home defence) is now the only purpose that can plausibly be invented for the army. All that can be expected of it in the real war that used to be its *raison d'être* is no longer victory but only 'giving the best account' of itself. The Navy, too, is advocated, not because it will be able to stay afloat or safeguard even one harbour if a 'real war' breaks out, but as a 'valuable weapon in the cold war against Communism' by virtue of 'the goodwill it engenders in foreign countries'. (A great help to naval architects this, mind you don't forget the galleys to cook tea and cakes for visitors and a good place to hang the bunting). The second document is a frantic endeavour to meet the situation, long foreseen with alarm by American columnists, of what to do when the Soviet Union substantially endorsed the Western disarmament schemes. The Four-Power statement cites three hastily-improvised causes of still-existing divergence: firstly, Soviet non-acceptance of the Eisenhower aerial inspection scheme as a measure of the initial stage; secondly, alleged Western desire not to separate conventional

from nuclear disarmament (which latter they claim now technically impracticable); thirdly, a new Western refusal to embark on any substantial disarmament at all until political issues are settled. The hasty, after-thought character of these objections emerges readily from recollection of the last-summer Geneva conference—when the Eisenhower aerial inspection scheme was put forward not in the least as a pre-condition for all or any disarmament, but as a *ben trovato* ‘extra’ from Dwight personally, designed to testify mutual confidence as between U.S.S.R. and U.S.A.—and comparison with the Defence White Paper which, as recently as February, 1956, was proclaiming British policy in the same terms as Moch ‘all such measures of adequately safeguarded disarmament as are now feasible’. The weakness of the third resides in its implied logical premise that retaining arms meanwhile will help in solving the political issues. How? By threatening use of the former in case the latter are not otherwise solved?

Herein lies the danger of acquiescing in the status quo—huge armed forces in being, nuclear weapons capable of wreaking untold disaster, huge expenditure on the arms race. After all, with the presence of the new weapons, the arms race—we quote again *The Times* of a year ago—has by now lost all sense it ever could have had. Even if, practically as well as theoretically, it were still possible to outdistance and become stronger than one’s opponent, even much stronger, what would be the advantage in being able to destroy him utterly eight times while he can still destroy you utterly once? Dangerously many people are inclined to feel that time is on our side, there’s no need to hurry, people will grow tired of enormous sacrifices whose sole significant purpose is to provide profits for arms firms, self-importance for generals as outdated as the dinosaurs, and killers for reactionary politicians to postpone the inevitable achievement of human rights and national freedoms—and meanwhile the Great Deterrent will keep the peace while we are waiting.

Unfortunately, things don’t work out quite so simply as that. The *New Statesman* not long ago printed a story about nuclear warfare being started—against orders, jumping the gun, so to speak—by a U.S. Air Commander in East Anglia whose fanatical anti-Communism was exacerbated by a painful illness that soured his temper and made him want to act before his personal ‘too late’. But there are not only Generals with boils on their bottoms, there are also politicians with boils on their souls. There is Dulles, boasting of his brinks; there are two of America’s allies, Chiang and Rhee, openly longing for World War III; there are the Western

commanders, fatuously purporting to distinguish the tactical from the strategic in the world of weapons; there are their new comrades (with whom Mr. Nutting feels so at home), the goose-steppers who once supped with Hitler and now refuse to renounce a divine mission to dismantle the frontiers to the east; there are the subsidised assassins of the 'liberty crusade' with their Crabbs and cloaks and daggers and balloons; there are the bloc-builders, refusing United Nations Charter-guaranteed self-determination 'for fear of neutrality', and equally refusing United Nations agreements for *all* to stop gun-running, in the interests of press-ganging cannon-fodder and runways for a war whose temperature and extent they pretend to think they can limit. The strategic problem is no dilemma to the reactionaries who say '*après moi le deluge*' and the madmen who set destruction above all. Can we hope there will never be another Hitler? We have no right to be sure. There are plenty of reckless people about, meanwhile our bedrooms and our nurseries are built, not on a powder magazine, but on an H-bomb. Science does not stand still. Nuclear knowledge is broadening, and already the weapons once restricted to one are the property of three. In *this* sense, *i.e.* if we stand still, time is not on our side. The pacifists who say 'war was always wrong' are winning support at last when they add 'and it is no longer expedient', but since the devil's dilemma in this respect will not, cannot possibly, get rid of war automatically, it has to serve as our inspiration to get rid of it in time.

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CONSTRUCTIVE CO-EXISTENCE

ECONOMISTA

THE dynamic trade policy of the U.S.S.R. gives a new significance to the phrase 'peaceful co-existence'. Its economic progress is being visibly demonstrated by the offers it is able to make to areas which have hitherto been dependent solely on the industrially advanced capitalist countries. Recent offers from the U.S.S.R. of economic aid are proving to the under-developed countries of the world that, in practice Soviet aid is able to give them more of what they want than offers from the West. To take one example, the Burmese Minister for Industry recently said that the Soviet Union could and would assist Burma in her plans for industrialisation and rural electrification: and that the terms were particularly attractive to Burma because the U.S.S.R. was prepared to take payment in the form of Burma's surplus rice and would not encroach on Burma's falling foreign reserves which were now only £30 million—40 per cent. of their level in 1951. Britain, on the other hand, required payment in foreign exchange and although Britain imported rice, she had switched her source of supply from Burma to Siam. (He hinted that this might be because Siam was more amenable to foreign economic control.) He also pooh-poohed the aid Burma had received under the Colombo Plan. The newly-elected government of Ceylon has made it quite plain that it intends to take steps to increase its trade with the Soviet Union, Eastern European countries and China. By doing this it hopes to get better prices for its exports and to get its imports at more competitive prices.

Offers of Soviet aid to under-developed countries, originally dismissed contemptuously as mere propaganda incapable of fulfilment, are now being seriously considered by the West. With agreements signed with India for the erection of a million ton steel plant, Soviet aid in Indian oil exploitation and diamond mining, the establishment of a joint Indo-Soviet shipping service, the equipment of a technical institute in Burma, the possibility of the erection of a steel plant and a tractor factory in Burma, the agreement to build grain silos, flour mills and bakeries in Afghanistan, the offer to build a national atomic institute in Egypt, offers of technical aid to Syria and Lebanon, the reality of Soviet economic rivalry cannot be ignored. Journals like the *Banker* and the *Statist* make no attempt to conceal the fact of Soviet aid to under-developed countries or their fear of a serious challenge to the West.

Comparison of Soviet and Western Offers of Aid

Judged solely in terms of money, the Soviet offers are in no way as large or extensive as those from the U.S.A. and other capitalist countries, but in terms of quality and suitability they are much nearer what is required by under-developed areas in their struggle for rapid industrialisation than the larger offers coming from the West—designed mainly to retain these countries as more efficient producers of raw materials.

(i) The West is willing to provide aid to develop agriculture and primary commodities, particularly dollar-earning commodities. (Indeed, the much-vaunted Colombo Plan set out quite deliberately and avowedly to provide aid for the increased production of dollar-earning raw materials in the Asian continent.) The Soviet Union is prepared to help in projects for industrialisation—the main need of all under-developed countries.

(ii) The West demand payment in foreign exchange, reserves of which are limited in many Asian countries. The U.S.S.R. is willing to take payment in local currency or in primary commodities and in this way help Asian and Middle Eastern countries, not only to dispose of their surpluses but to proceed with plans for industrialisation without waiting to build up reserves of foreign currency. Soviet aid can thus be had without laying a burden on the country's trade and payments balance. The Indian steel plant for example is to be paid for in rupees. In the Lebanon, the Soviet Union has offered to modernise the country's road net-work and other communication development in return for Lebanese fruit—the chief national export which its former markets no longer absorb in quantities. In Burma, aid is to be paid for by surplus Burmese rice. In Middle Eastern countries, machinery and steel were provided in exchange for cotton—at a time when traditional outlets for this cotton were choked by the U.S. surplus.

(iii) When loans are required, the U.S.S.R. asks for only 2 per cent. interest, while the minimum charged on U.S. aid loans is 4 per cent. Rates of interest charged by private industrialists are of course much higher. The U.S.S.R. is prepared to give loans 'without strings', whereas institutions like the International Bank insist on supervision of domestic economic policy of the borrowing country to try and safeguard its capital. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is not interested in investment in foreign countries.

(iv) The crying need in under-developed countries is for *technicians*. All the projects in the Colombo Plan are handicapped by

a dearth of technicians; this has been pointed out again and again in the various Colombo Plan progress reports. The Soviet Union is prepared to provide large numbers of highly qualified technicians and skilled workers to show under-developed countries how to build and operate their plants. Moreover, they are willing and eager to train local technicians both in their own countries and in the Soviet Union. The main object of Soviet economic aid offers is to try and hand over plant to qualified local technicians as soon as possible.

(v) The injection of funds from Western countries in projects under the Colombo Plan has proved inflationary and drives up living costs. This also applies to American aid under which dollars have been pumped into a country for military purposes. The results of such long-term capital projects do not show for a long time and in the meantime this aid does nothing to help the primary producers to dispose of their surplus crops. Thus, as a result of aid from the West, the primary producer and wage-earner may well be temporarily worse off.

(vi) The U.S.S.R. is able to offer 'complete industrial installations'—just the type of aid under-developed countries need in their drive for rapid industrialisation. The Soviet offer to build a complete steel mill in India is one such offer. Under such offers a complete industrial unit is set up with Soviet technicians to erect the plant and train local labour to run it. Other countries in Eastern Europe are making similar offers—Czechoslovakia is building a cement factory in Afghanistan and a porcelain factory in Egypt. East Germany is constructing a sugar refinery in Burma and Poland is building a chemical plant in Indonesia.

(vii) The U.S.S.R. has exhibited conspicuously at Bombay, Djarkarta, Bangkok, Damascus, Karachi and New Delhi. This display of industrial power in countries which the West regard as secondary market cannot help but make a good impression in favour of the Soviet Union and to make purchasers in these countries anxious to buy Soviet goods.

First Effects of Soviet Russia's Offers

Soviet offers of economic aid help to show up the true character of, or at best, the pathetic inadequacy of Western offers of aid to under-developed countries. If they wish to retain their footholds in these markets they must willy-nilly bring their own offers more in line with the Soviet offers and this means that their plans to retain under-developed countries as producers of raw materials must be modified.

Under-developed countries cannot help noticing that it is only after the Soviet Union comes out with an attractive offer that the West improves its own offers. The British steel project in India is a good case in point; because of the attractive Soviet project for a steel mill in India, involving interest at only 2 per cent. per annum and payment in rupees, the British Steel Consortium was forced to amend its own offer to India very considerably. They had to reduce their cost by £1½ million and agree to more liberal loan terms—including a credit of £11½ million at 6½ per cent. to the Government of India arranged through Lazard's Bank. Without the yardstick of the Soviet mill the British would have got away with a much less favourable offer. It has been admitted in the British press that the offer to build a steel plant in India is not to be considered as an economic project, but as a political move that had to be undertaken as a reply to the Soviet challenge! Commenting on this British offer the *Economist* of March 2 said, 'the first instalment of the cost of competing with the Russians for the good graces of Asian neutralists is clearly a formidable one'. Again, there was the case of the Aswan Dam project in Egypt, where the West were using delaying tactics until the U.S.S.R. came forward with offers of aid in the form of credits and technical assistance.

Soviet steps to offer this new type of economic aid to areas hitherto regarded as preserves of the West are already beginning to have far-reaching effects. To sum up, the under-developed areas of the world are coming to realise that it is perfectly possible for them to embark on plans for the rapid industrialisation of their countries immediately without (a) having to wait to build up adequate reserves of foreign exchange and (b) handing over their economy to foreign investors.

Counter moves by the West

The Soviet offers of economic aid have got the capitalist countries worried; they realise that with the Soviet offers as a measuring rod, they can no longer get away with their old methods. To retain their footholds in markets in Asia and the Middle East, they feel that they must do something to recapture their lost prestige—and deal with a more critical awareness that Western economic aid is no more than imperialist capital penetration.

The United States Government has revised its policy on foreign aid and decided, as a counter move to what they term 'the Russian trade offensive', to double the quantity of money it is to spend on foreign aid.

Western Germany, which is determined to capture a share of the trade of the under-developed countries, is most virulent in its attacks on Soviet Aid. One of the West German suggestions of a counter-offensive is that the Atlantic Pact governments should develop a joint 'Point Four' programme for the Middle East and the Far East. Western governments should provide cheap credit to firms wishing to invest in these countries. Krupps is reported to have carried the suggestion even further: that the U.S.A. should provide the funds and that private firms in Germany, France and the United Kingdom should use these funds to make offers for economic aid in under-developed countries.

Even Japan is growing alarmed at the threat which Soviet offers of economic aid hold out to Japan's plans for exploiting markets in Asia. At an economic conference held in Tokyo on January 16, attended by 15 Ambassadors and other Japanese diplomatic representatives from Asian countries, to discuss the question of economic aid to Asia, the main subject for discussion was the success that the Soviet Union and countries in Eastern Europe had achieved in establishing economic footholds in Asian countries. These countries were offering high prices for Asian primary products at a time when overhanging U.S. surpluses tended to depress world markets. The conference gave examples of such offers (some already mentioned above) as follows:

- (a) The U.S.S.R. was to build a steel mill in India in return for staple commodities on generous credit terms.
- (b) Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia underbid the United Kingdom, West Germany and Belgium in a recent tender for a harbour and waterworks in Burma, but also agreed to deferred payment in farm products.
- (c) East Germany has agreed to build Indonesia a 7 million dollar sugar refinery with a 25-ton daily capacity; payment to be in Indonesian produce over a period of six years.
- (d) Poland has offered Burma machinery and capital goods on similar terms.
- (e) Burma has accepted a Soviet offer of technical aid in agriculture.

It is natural that the dynamic Soviet policy in relation to under-developed countries is feared by monopoly capital precisely because it undermines their dominant position (*i.e.*, their monopoly) from which a narrow sector of people have made large profits in the past. Obviously, the big monopolies will be hurt by these Soviet offers of aid as it will cost them a part of their profits to compete effectively. But will this Soviet trade policy be detrimental to other sections of Britain? By increasing the pace of industrialisation and economic development of the under-developed areas of the world, it will

provide new and expanding markets for British exports. As a trading nation Britain stands to gain by all steps that are taken to increase the purchasing power of these Asian and Middle Eastern countries and thus offer widened opportunities for British exports. The whole policy of imperialist exploitation (by deliberately restricting the economic development of these areas) has proved disastrous to the British economy and we need have no regrets in seeing this policy run into difficulties. The vital need for export markets on the one hand and trade to obtain the raw materials for British industries will not be damaged, but, on the contrary, will be helped by the growing economies of the under-developed countries. The Soviet offers which provide just such a stimulus, are therefore not to be dreaded by anyone—save the monopolists. The new economic relations which will emerge are not only historically necessary but to be welcomed by those whose prime consideration is to bring about an expanding trade between Britain and the hitherto under-developed areas of the world on a *mutually* advantageous basis. At the same time, the political consequences of these developments are as important, or more important and beneficial to the people of Britain, than their economic consequences. The growing strength and independence of the under-developed and ex-colonial countries, undermines the whole economic policy of imperialism and must encourage the labour movement in its fight to end this policy and all its damaging consequences that hold back living standards and social services and prevent stable economic progress in Britain itself.

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Book Reviews

WEST GERMAN TRIAL

The Karlsruhe Trial, Translated by C. P. Dutt. (128 pp. Lawrence & Wishart. 2s. 6d.)

EVER since November, 1951, a scandalous political trial has been jerking its way along before the Constitutional Court of the Federal German Republic at Karlsruhe. Its object is to have the Communist Party of Germany (with a large number of other bodies) declared to be unconstitutional, and thus deprived of its whole existence in the political life of Western Germany, where the Party is of great importance. The demand rests on the same general ground as has been used in the United States to send Communists to prison for being Communists; in fact, the details of the accusations, and the absence of any suggestion that the Party has done anything illegal, resemble so closely the position of the American cases that it is plain that the inspiration of these prosecutions comes from the same source as, say, the rearmament of Western Germany.

The case gives a very good—or a very bad—illustration of how, in a political case in a time of tension, a government will seek more and more shamelessly to undermine the independence and even the integrity of judges. And it gives, too, something of a picture of the utter hypocrisy of the claim of the Adenauer régime to be a democracy, and of the appalling atmosphere of repression in Western Germany today (which, as one of its victims told me, reminded him of the third Reich just before Hitler took power). This case, and others like it, should have filled the columns of the less unscrupulous of our capitalist newspapers; it was of first-class importance for the formation of

a true public opinion. But our government and its press do not want the British public to know too much of Western Germany, and the case was in any event a slow and complicated affair, difficult to report.

It was therefore, to my mind, urgently necessary that a real picture of the case should be given to the people of this country by means of a book. It was not an easy task, in spite of the excellent material which the Communist Party of Germany has published for the German public, to give an intelligible story to British readers, for it involved making an intelligible and reasonably brief narrative of an intolerably long case, carried on in a strange legal procedure. In *The Karlsruhe Trial for banning the Communist Party of Germany* an attempt has been made to produce such a book, by translating extracts from the large 'White Paper' published by the Communist Party. The main defect of such a method is that there is insufficient explanation of the procedure, which the reader ought to understand to some extent if he is to follow the case; the whole proceedings seem confused and lifeless, and the book does not read very easily to the English reader, notwithstanding the excellence of the translation. But, in spite of defects, the book (consisting in the main of an Introduction, of 56 pages of narrative of parts of the trial (very well selected from a huge mass), and 45 pages of miscellaneous Appendices) can teach the attentive reader a great deal. There is much exposure of the aggressive character of the West German government; of its desire to absorb the Democratic Republic and put that region's clock back to the monopoly capitalism of 'U.S.A.-Germany' and to recover other 'lost' territories by war; and of its wholesale rehabilitation and re-employment of Nazis. And there is

a magnificent contrast between the misbehaviour of the prosecution and the bias of the Court on the one hand, and the conduct of the representatives of the Communist Party and its advocates on the other. History will, I think, judge in the end that their well-informed, resourceful, and courageous defence and counter-attack deserve a high place in the long list of heroisms of political defences.

This book is not easy reading; but it does give the attentive reader an understanding of the monstrous abuse of liberty and justice involved in these proceedings, and of the nature of the Adenauer Government, which can be seen to deserve at once the double award of a Hitler cross and a McCarthy cross. Free elections, indeed!

D. N. PRITT

Shorter Notice

Looking at China, by Paul Hogarth. (90 pp. Lawrence & Wishart. 12s. 6d.)

BRILLIANT drawings combined with the author's own racy and illuminating journal together give a vivid living picture of New China. Two of the many drawings are reproduced in this month's middle spread.

R.T.

Communication

PETER THE FIRST

From Yvonne Kapp and Maurice Cornforth (Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd.):

As the publisher and the editor of Alexey Tolstoy's *Peter the First*, reviewed in your April issue, we wish to make the following comments:

(1) The word for 'trousers', in Russian, as in English, is not the

same as the word for 'pants'. In the case (p. 232) which saddens Mr. Christopher Hill so much, the word 'pants' (*podshdanniki*) is used, meaning pants—though perhaps he has accustomed himself to the American usage 'underpants'—and his little homily on 'bowing to American culture' is not merely misplaced, but shows how a scholar and historian can come to grief when he goes for a lion of a book like *Peter the First* with a pea-shooter and a not very sure aim.

(2) The transliteration of Russian names is by no means standardised and, though Mr. Hill does not specify the Russian names which, in his view, are 'oddly printed', we ourselves would like to draw particular attention to the practice in this book of transliterating the guttural Russian 'kh' as 'h'—e.g. 'Hovansky'—in the hope that it will gain currency, since it is more acceptable to Russian speakers and scholars than the hard 'k' generally pronounced by English readers for 'kh'. (We may note in passing that in the case of Chehov, the practice is well established).

(3) The disingenuousness of Mr. Hill's criticism is betrayed by his affected shudder at the phrase: 'a cup with coffee'. He has omitted a qualifying word. The sentence where this appalling thing occurs (p. 263) is, in fact: 'a table on which stood roast meat, crusty rolls and a gilt cup with coffee'. Of course, one might have said 'containing coffee' if that is the sort of thing one likes to say, but presumably nobody except Mr. Hill would have preferred the rendering 'a gilt cup of coffee'.

Similarly, 'poppy-seed rolls' (which Mr. Hill recommends in place of 'rolls with poppy-seed') generally means rolls with a filling of poppy-seed and other spices and not, as

intended here, rolls sprinkled with poppy-seed.

It should be pointed out that the first of these 'dreadful literal translations', as Mr. Hill calls them, occurs once in a book of 320,000 words; the second, three times. The remark, therefore, that they 'appear far too often' can only indicate that Mr. Hill must have led a remarkably sheltered life where translations from the Russian are concerned.

(4) The editorial revision of this book, made in the closest co-operation with a most scholarly and experienced translator, covered almost a year's consultation, correspondence, debate and research at every stage from manuscript to final proof, to which very careful treatment is due, to some extent, the readability of the present edition. The reviewer, however, has not troubled to mention the majestic power and complexity of this novel, contenting himself with the statement that it is 'faithful to the historical evidence' and proceeding to tell the story of the events covered.

Alexey Tolstoy's unique style—not to mention his great erudition—sets translators and editors problems of so formidable an order that Mr. Hill's points are almost derisory in their pettiness.

Our reviewer writes :

I am sorry that the editor and publisher were so upset by my review of *Peter the First*. It would indeed be churlish to criticise in a niggling way so vast a task as the translation from the Russian of an 800-page book, whose readability I praised in my review. I also praised the production and relative cheapness of

the book; my criticisms were of editorial blemishes, and occupied less than a quarter of the review. If I reply to the comments of the editor and publisher, I do not wish to suggest that issues of any importance are involved.

Of my five specific criticisms, the letter ignores two. I take this to mean that they have been accepted in the comradely spirit in which they were made. On 'pants', I am to blame for not having checked the Russian, and I apologise if my attempt to be funny did not come off. I had got accustomed to the American usage 'underpants' from its employment on p. 405 of the novel: but perhaps I was expecting too much consistency. When I said that some Russian names were 'oddly printed', I meant 'oddly printed', not 'oddly transliterated'. To give an example, 'Pereyaslav' is spelt wrongly almost as often as it is spelt right. This is, I agree, a proof-reader's criticism, serious only because Pereyaslav is one of the places most frequently named in the book. 'A cup with coffee' is good Russian but bad English; and it seems to me bad English whatever kind of cup it is. 'A cup containing coffee' would be English whatever kind of cup it is. 'A cup containing coffee' would be English, though stilted: most Englishmen would say 'a gilt cup full of coffee'. Other points, which I did not mention in my original review, could perhaps have been cleared up in 'almost a year's research'. Thus the torture so often described in the book as that of the rack is, I believe, the strappado: it is certainly not the rack. But this again is a mere matter of editorial accuracy. Readers will no doubt decide for themselves whether my adjective 'powerful' is obviously less correct than the publishers' assessment of this book.



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FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO RATIONALISATION THEN, AUTOMATION NOW

More and more powerful combines dominate the industry, such as the Associated Electrical Industries, Ltd., the British Steel Corporation, etc., which are in a much better condition to carry through rationalisation, by reorganising the shops on 'scientific lines' with a speeding up of the workers consequent on such reorganisation, by concentrating and transferring certain work to particular factories in the combine, and by the introduction of new and up-to-date machinery. By this means thousands of workers are displaced, while those remaining at work are driven much more intensively. In all the workshops, particularly in the big factories on mass production, there has been this fierce and intensified rationalisation drive. The introduction into the industry of new and specialised machine tools merits special attention. . . .

The development of the scientific machine tool, mass production, standardisation and simplification, use of jigs, gauges, and precision tools has led to great changes for the workers. The Report of the Balfour Committee showed a change of from 60 per cent. of the workers graded as skilled, 20 per cent. semi-skilled, and 20 per cent. unskilled in 1913, to 40 per cent. skilled, 45 per cent. semi-skilled, and 15 per cent. unskilled in 1926. Today, five years later, it is safe to say that a majority of the workers are graded as semi-skilled, and are indeed semi-paid. The day of the old skilled craftsman has gone.

From *The Attack on the Engineers*, by Edmund Frow,
June, 1931.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

- India Today and Tomorrow, by R. Palme Dutt. Lawrence & Wishart. 304 pp. 12s. 6d.
Cavalier of the Gold Star, by S. P. Babayevsky. Lawrence & Wishart. 628 pp. 12s. 6d.
International Atomic Policy, by E. Biorklund. Allen & Unwin. 148 pp. 15s.
Marx/Engels Selected Correspondence. Lawrence & Wishart. 624 pp. 10s. 6d.
Outline History of World Trade Union Movement, by W. Z. Foster. International Publishers, New York. \$6.
George Meredith: His Life and Work, by Jack Lindsay. Bodley Head. 420 pp. 30s.
Adventures in Bukhara, by Leonid Solovyev. Lawrence & Wishart. 256 pp. 9s. 6d.
I. V. Pavlov: Selected Works. Central Books. 654 pp. 10s. 6d.
The Colour Curtain, by Richard Wright. Dobson. 188 pp. 12s. 6d.
Window on Russia, by Maurice Miller. Lawrence & Wishart. 90 pp. 12s. 6d.
The Changing Germans, by Paula Wiking. Lincolns-Prager. 138 pp. 12s. 6d.
Keynesian Economics: A Symposium. (Dobb, Foster, Gollan, DasGupta, Meek, Mortimer, Patel, etc.) People's Publishing House, Delhi. 234 pp. Rs. 8.12.
Servant of the County, by Margaret Cole. Dobson. 200 pp. 15s.
After the 'Thirties, by Jack Lindsay. Lawrence & Wishart. 240 pp. 15s.

PAMPHLETS

- Automation—Friend or Foe? by J. R. Campbell. Communist Party. 16 pp. 3d.
Labour in Irish History, by James Connolly. New Books, Dublin. 132 pp. 2s. 6d.

Published by the Proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3,
and printed by Wembley News, Wembley, Middlesex, Great Britain. Registered for
transmission by Magazine Post to Canada, including Newfoundland.

busy delegates had seen to that—and insisted on the expense being their personal contribution to L.M.'s fund. That's the sort of way workers demonstrate support for what they value. What pleasure this story will give a reader who writes to me from a Lancashire hospital, sending 2s. ('all I can afford'), and adding: 'I know you are confronted with rising costs and tremendous difficulties on all sides; but I'm sure you'll get support from people in the Labour movement to push L.M. ahead, amongst Labour Party members and all progressive people. And so press on the fight against this disunity and despair. Something seriously will have to be done about at least doubling the circulation. There must be Marxism and more Marxism'.

I have been often struck by how keenly overseas readers follow events in Britain and the labour movement here: Alderman Fred Henderson's article *British Labour and the Soviet Union* came in for much comment from them—and I am looking forward eagerly to see what readers

everywhere think of *New Times, New Measures* and the other articles in this number. Canadians and American readers particularly were captivated by Sancho Panza's *Nato—Fact and Fiction*. Very timely was his 'devastating exposure' of Article 2, under which—to quote an American—'they are preparing to disguise their Nato war league with the cloak of economic assistance! But so long as Nato remains honeycombed with military personnel, it cannot be regarded as changing its war-like purposes by any camouflage of extending economic aid to under-developed countries. Only the uninformed and gullible could be deceived by so transparent a fraud'. Of the same article, a Canadian says simply: 'Your Sancho Panza's peerless!'. There remains another Canadian who remarks that recent letters in this column 'reminded me sharply that I was long overdue for a donation. I have read it for years and have derived measureless satisfaction from it—finest in its field'. Donations received during April totalled:

£34 11s. 2d.

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